



Friends of the Central Experimental Farm

Summer 2018 Newsletter

Volume 30 No. 3

An Unveiling At This Year's June Blooms

By Blaine Marchand



Courtesy of Chris Wilson

Perennial Border, by Faith Fyles (see page 9). This border, built by William T. Macoun, was on the main lawn at the Farm from 1912 until the early 1930s.

Unveiling of replanted portions of the Macoun Memorial Garden and a commemorative plaque took place at 1pm on Sunday, June 24th during the Friends' second annual *June Blooms* day. This project, undertaken jointly by the Ottawa Horticultural Society (OHS) and the Friends, commemorated Canada's 150th anniversary and the 125th anniversary of the OHS. The much-loved Macoun Garden was opened in 1936 in memory of William T. Macoun, Dominion Horticulturist from 1910 until 1933, and OHS President in 1899.

Capturing the spirit of a 1930s garden

Since its opening, the centre part of the Macoun Memorial Garden has always been

more formal with its sunken area, its pond and its plantings. The outer area of the garden has reflected the informal plantings that were very much favoured by Macoun. So, this joint project is very much in line with the historic concept of the garden itself and with the informal perimeter conceived by landscape architect Warren Oliver and his Farm colleague, Isabella Preston.

To prepare for the replanting of the northeast and northwest areas, OHS member and horticultural historian, Lynn Armstrong undertook extensive research, visiting the Royal Botanical Garden in Burlington, where Isabella Preston's journals are housed. Preston was a Central Experimental Farm (CEF) employee, working under Macoun, and her hybridizing work was recognized internationally.

The original plan, as drawn by Oliver, was not found but Lynn drew on CEF plant lists from that time to ensure that the range of plants—perennials, annuals, native plants, and shrubs—was integrated into the replanted area. To ensure future access to the historic information and the team's own discussions, an electronic reference document was created, which is accessible via a QR code on the commemorative plaque.

Working with Polly McColl and Denise Kennedy of the Friends, Lynn and Tuula Talvila from the OHS created a planting design of perennials, native plants (of which Macoun was an enthusiast), and shrubs for the two areas. A list of historical varieties of spring bulbs was drawn from Ottawa bulb catalogues of that era. As a number of the original perennials are no longer available, the intent of the planting was to reflect the spirit of that time and also the type of planting favoured by Macoun. Throughout the planning, the team, headed by Rob Brandon, consulted the employees of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, whose input and enthusiasm for this project was much appreciated.

The plants and the plaque

The perennials (including native plants) and shrubs for the project (see list on page 11) were ordered from Mary Reid at Green Thumb Nursery, where they were cared for until planting took place. Funding for the purchases was the result of a special project grant given by the Ontario Horticultural Association. The Friends covered the cost of the commemorative plaque while Jean-Pascal (J-P) Gratton from the department provided the rock to which the plaque was affixed. Translation of texts was done by Jean-Phillipe Tabet and proof-read by Jean-Pierre Regnault.

Following a clean-up of the area by the Friends' Macoun Garden team led by Denise Kennedy, planting began in mid June, with

Continued on page 3

President's Message

This summer brings to a close two big projects we have been involved with.

The first is the completion of the second phase of our joint project with the Ottawa Horticultural Society (OHS). The impetus for this project was to celebrate Canada's 150th anniversary and the OHS's 125th anniversary. As many of you know, phase one was completed last year with the installation of informational plaques in the small gazebo in the Ornamental Gardens. The second phase was a renovation of part of the Macoun Memorial Garden. With help from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) staff, our volunteer team for the garden and members of the OHS completed the new planting by the time of *June Blooms*. At that event, with Joel Wilkin and Jeremy Dizazzo of AAFC and members of the OHS, we dedicated the renovated portion of the garden. Also attending were Chris Wilson and Derek Fortune, grandsons of William Macoun.

We wish to extend a special thank you to everyone who has worked hard to make the project a success. Many have worked on it for two years or more. Our ongoing work in

the Garden will include maintaining the new plantings, so in that regard the project is not really finished. We are also pleased to have the pond at the garden repaired.

The other large project that is coming to a close is the Merivale Shelterbelt. With the support of the many people who contributed funds, we have been planting trees and shrubs since 2005. AAFC planted 150 trees last year in recognition of Canada's 150th anniversary. With that, the area is largely filled and so we decided that this would be the last year we will receive contributions for the Shelterbelt. And, it will be the last year for significant plantings. We owe a great deal of thanks to the many volunteers who have worked long hours and many days at the Shelterbelt, particularly Polly McColl who has led the group and done much of the planning for the area.

Like the Macoun Garden, there is a great deal of ongoing maintenance work for us to do at the Shelterbelt. We will also replace trees and shrubs as needed. And even though we won't be expanding the planted area, we will do things to enhance the Shelterbelt. For example, we plan to install informational signs for the various trees and shrubs, and we also plan to install some more benches.

If you have never visited the Merivale Shelterbelt, I encourage you to do so. It is a wonderful place to walk or just sit and enjoy the trees.

We are proud of both of these projects.

Judy Dodds

Message de la présidente

Cet été, deux projets d'envergure dans lesquels nous avons participé auront été menés à terme.

Le premier de ceux-ci représente la réalisation de la deuxième étape du projet entrepris en collaboration avec la Ottawa Horticultural Society (la Société d'horticulture d'Ottawa). Le 150^e anniversaire du Canada et le 125^e anniversaire de la Société nous ont incités à entreprendre ce projet. Comme bon nombre d'entre vous le savent, la première étape a été conclue l'an dernier avec l'installation de plaques d'information au petit pavillon qui se trouve dans les Jardins ornementaux. Au cours de la deuxième étape, le travail consistait à remettre à neuf une partie du jardin mémorial Macoun. Appuyée du personnel d'Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada (AAC), notre équipe de bénévoles dédiés au jardin et des membres de la Société ont terminé la mise en terre de nouvelles plantes à temps pour la tenue de l'événement des Fleurs de juin. Ce fut l'occasion pour nous, de concert avec Joel Wilkin et Jeremy Dizazzo d'AAFC et des membres de la Société, de dédicacer la nouvelle partie du jardin. Chris Wilson and Derek Fortune, petits-fils de William Macoun, étaient aussi présents.

Nous désirons offrir des remerciements bien spéciaux à

chacun des bénévoles qui ont déployé maints efforts pour faire de ce projet un vif succès. Plusieurs d'entre eux y ont travaillé pendant deux ans ou plus. Le travail qui se poursuit dans le jardin inclut l'entretien des nouvelles plantes, une indication que le projet n'est pas tout à fait terminé. Qui plus est, l'étang du jardin Macoun a été réaménagé, et nous nous en réjouissons.

L'autre grand projet devant se terminer très bientôt est celui du brise-vent Merivale. Forts de l'appui du grand nombre de personnes qui ont apporté une contribution financière, nous avons été en mesure de planter des arbres et des arbustes depuis 2005. AAC a planté 150 arbres l'an dernier pour marquer le 150^e anniversaire du Canada. Tous ces arbres remplissent bien la superficie, et nous avons convenu que nous n'accepterions plus aucune contribution pour le brise-vent après cette année; il s'agit aussi de la dernière année pour des plantations majeures. Nous devons une profonde reconnaissance aux nombreux bénévoles qui ont œuvré pendant de

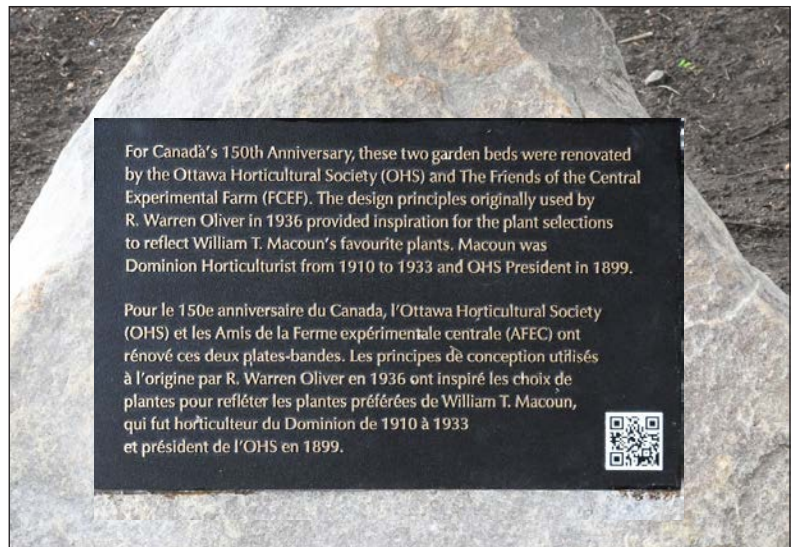
longues heures et de nombreux jours sur les lieux du brise-vent, en particulier Polly McColl, qui a dirigé le groupe et a veillé à une bonne partie de la planification de ce secteur.

Comme pour le jardin Macoun, nous avons beaucoup d'entretien à faire en tout temps au brise-vent. Nous remplacerons des arbres et des arbustes s'il y a lieu. Vu que nous ne serons pas en mesure de procéder à l'agrandissement de la superficieensemencée, nous apporterons des améliorations au brise-vent. Nous pourrions, entre autres, placer des plaques donnant de l'information sur les différents arbres et arbustes et installer des bancs.

Si vous n'avez pas eu l'occasion déjà de visiter le brise-vent Merivale, je vous encourage à le faire. C'est un endroit exquis pour y faire une promenade ou une halte tout simplement et pour vous détendre en la présence des arbres.

Nous dérivons une grande fierté d'avoir exécuté ces deux projets.

Judy Dodds



An Unveiling At This Year's June Blooms ... *(continued from page 1)*

the spring bulbs to be planted in the autumn of this year. The Garden team will maintain the replanted areas in addition to the ongoing work they do in the rest of the Garden.

First part of the project unveiled last year

This project had two components. The first one, unveiled last year at *June Blooms*, was the installation in the pergola by the Explorer Rose Garden of English and French plaques on the important role the CEF played in hybridizing ornamental plants

suitable to the Canadian climate, and on three hybridizers associated with the CEF—Isabella Preston (lilacs, lilies, roses, crabapples, irises), Dr. Felicitas Svejda (Explorer roses) and A.P. (Percy) Saunders (peonies). The plaques also have QR codes by which people can access, via their phones, more information on the hybridizers and their achievements along with glorious photographs. The pergola was an appropriate site for the first component as the OHS built the garden structure to celebrate its 100th year as a Society in 1993.

Launching the revamped portions of

the Macoun Garden during the second *June Blooms* was most appropriate. Expert garden volunteers provided visitors with free guided tours of the various floral collections in the Ornamental Gardens, which have enchanted visitors for more than a century. An added element this year was the presence of artists from the Ottawa Society of Botanical Artists sketching in the Gardens.

Blaine Marchand, peony lover and poet, is the Friends' director of gardens.



Tuula Talvila

Rob Brandon, Nancy McDonald, Gloria Sola planting at the Macoun Memorial Garden, June 2018.



R. Hincholiff

Tuula Talvila (OHS), Derek Fortune, grandson of William Macoun, Lynn Armstrong (OHS), Chris Wilson, grandson of William Macoun, Denise Kennedy and Judy Dodds (FCEF), Joel Wilkin and Jeremy Dizazzo (AAFC), at the unveiling.

By the Numbers, 2018

Years ago

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>20 Central Experimental Farm declared a National Historic Site</p> <p>30 Friends of the Farm founded</p> <p>50 'Martin Frobisher', first Explorer rose released</p> <p>85 Isabella Preston's Stenographer lilies readied for release</p> <p>90 Preston's first Rosybloom crabapples introduced</p> | <p>95 First blooms appeared on what were to become Preston lilacs</p> <p>115 Percy Saunders began his peony notebooks</p> <p>130 William Macoun, aged 19, became assistant to CEF Director William Saunders</p> |
|--|--|

Celebrating 20 Years of the Victorian Tea

"The day was perfect - we could not have asked for more," wrote Diana Dakers, in the September 1988 edition of this newsletter about the first Friends of the Farm Victorian Tea, held to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Friends. "Your costumes were great. Start thinking about a bonnet for next year. We are thinking about giving a prize for the best one." Diana and Nora Campbell organized and hosted the event, with the help of a lot of volunteers.

For 20 years now, the costumes have been great and the best

bonnets rewarded. There is not only a prize for the best hat, but also prizes for the best male and female costumes. Polly McColl, organizer and host, says the event on July 22 (see page 4) will be a special celebration of 20 years of Victorian Teas and 30 years for the Friends of the Farm. Musicians, special guests and an army of volunteers will ensure an enjoyable experience for a capacity crowd of 275. As usual, it will be first come, first served for tickets.

Upcoming Events

For more information, visit www.friendsofthefarm.ca or call 613-230-3276.

Victorian Tea (see page 3)

- Sunday, July 22, from 2 to 4 pm. (Will be cancelled in event of rain.)
- Classic tea served under the trees of the Arboretum.
- Enter the best hat and best costume (men and women) contests.
- Ticket sales end at 3:15 or until sold out.
- Location: Under the trees in the Arboretum near Building 72, east



of the Prince of Wales roundabout.

- Free parking; tickets for formal tea \$15, reservations not required.

Art on the Farm

- Saturday, August 11, from 10 to 4 pm. (Rain date: August 12.)
- Artists will display and sell their original works under the trees of the Arboretum.
- Event also features a silent auction of artwork, sale of art books, and refreshments.
- Location: near Building 72, in the Arboretum, east of the Prince of

Wales roundabout.

- Free admission and parking.

Used Book Drop-off

- Saturday, October 20, 10 am to 3 pm.
- Save your books and donate them for a great cause.
- Note that we do not accept magazines, textbooks and encyclopaedias.
- Location: Building 72, by the Arboretum. Take the east exit off the Prince of Wales roundabout.



Upcoming Tree Tours

The following are upcoming guided tours in the Arboretum. Although the tours are free and open to the public, please register in advance at trees@friendsofthefarm.ca or call 613-230-3276. Donations to the Friends of the Farm will be kindly accepted during the tour. See www.friendsofthefarm.ca for more information on these and other tours.

Canadian Institute of Forestry Tour, by Ken Farr

- Thursday, July 12, 3:30 pm.
- The Ottawa Valley Section of the Canadian Institute of Forestry is holding their Annual General Meeting in Building 72 at the

Arboretum. This will be followed by a tree tour led by Ken Farr in the Arboretum, with participation open to anyone who would care to join in.

Got Bats? by Bettina Henkelman

- Saturday, July 14, 8 pm.
 - Meet at Building 72 in the Arboretum.
- Learn about our flying furry friends, Ottawa's bats species, their superpowers and their habitat. Bettina Henkelman will take us to the pond to see if we can catch their aerial acrobatics, and eavesdrop using a special bat detector. Bring a flashlight, good footwear and bug repellent!

A Night With the Moths, with Diane Lepage and Owen Clarkin

- Friday, July 20, 8:30 pm.
 - Meet at Building 72 in the Arboretum.
- Discover the nightlife of moths! Black lights, a white sheet and perhaps sugaring on a tree trunk should attract moths of various families. Bring a flashlight, good footwear and bug repellent! This outing depends on the weather. If the temperature drops below 18C or it rains, the outing will be postponed to Friday, August 3.

Check www.friendsofthefarm.ca for information on other Arboretum tours.

New! Master Gardener Fall Lectures

Mark your calendars for something new this year - two Master Gardener lectures in the fall. As in the spring, they will be held from 7 to 9 pm in Building 72, Arboretum, Central Experimental Farm. See www.friendsofthefarm.ca for more information on each lecture and to sign up. Individual talks are \$12 for members of the Friends, \$15 for others.

October 16 - **Bulbs for Year-Round Enjoyment** with Mary Reid.

November 6 - **History of English Country House Gardens** with Heather Clemenson.

Gardening and Other Opportunities

Come and enjoy the Farm up close! Young or old, skilled or unskilled, there are opportunities for all in the Friends of the Farm's volunteer teams in the Ornamental Gardens, Arboretum and Merivale Shelterbelt. There are also many non-gardening volunteer opportunities for you to apply your skills or learn new ones, work on your own or in a team.

Please visit our website at www.friendsofthefarm.ca/volunteer, contact us at volunteer@friendsofthefarm.ca or call the office at 613-230-3276. We hope to see you at the Farm.

And a reminder to volunteers—if you change your contact information, including email address, please let us know.

From the Friends' Office ...

Hello. My name is Jennifer Thompson-Walker and I am so pleased to be working as the new Office Manager with Friends of the Central Experimental Farm. My background is in Nutrition but for the last six years I have been working part time in various capacities at Algonquin College, which allowed me to be at home with my two boys. In my spare time I love biking, cooking, and planning my next travel destination. I was born and raised in Ottawa, and am looking forward to learning more about the Farm, its glorious gardens, and meeting the many hardworking, dedicated volunteers who work so hard at maintaining, promoting and educating others about this historic space.

Jennifer has taken over from Alisha Rexford, who left in May to pursue her career as a yoga teacher. Alisha's good cheer, warmth and expertise served the Friends well for almost three years. We wish her well, and we welcome Jennifer.



Matthew LaCompte, Aboriginal Rights Consultant

By Richard Hinchcliff

Matthew LaCompte followed a degree in history with a career in history, and wonders if that is a rare thing. It didn't look like it was going to happen, though, at the beginning.

After earning his degree at the University of Ottawa in 1986, he began a graduate program in history but happened to hear Barbara Frum on CBC national news mention a Japanese Exchange and Teaching (JET) program. The program was offering 70 Canadian university graduates the opportunity to teach in Japan, joining another 1,200 or so graduates from around the world. Matthew jumped at the chance and left his studies behind.

It was an interesting year at a public high school for boys in Tokyo, helping students converse in English. They had a good grounding in the language, says Matthew, but lacked the ability and confidence to speak it. It was a rewarding experience in another way also—he was able to pay off his student loan.

From student researcher to expert witness

Back in Canada, revelling in a summer manual labour job, he reluctantly applied to the federal government's Career Oriented Summer Employment Program (COSEP), and was invited to an interview at the Department of Indian Affairs for a position as a student researcher. He accepted an offer and began working for the department.

Matthew credits his mother for nagging him to make the COSEP application, which not only led to a career in history, but also to meeting his wife Helen, who was also doing historical research at Indian Affairs. "Several years later she was my boss," says Matthew. "After a while, we realized that one of us would have to leave the department." He was the one to go, setting up a research consulting business for seven years before joining a private company specializing in aboriginal rights research.

The main focus of his aboriginal rights research has been on land settlement issues, in some cases requiring research back to the 1600s and the production of well-documented historical reports. Some of his clients in government or First Nations have required Matthew's presence in court as an expert witness. "It has been a challenge at times," he says, "to bite my tongue" during lengthy and occasionally trying cross-examination proceedings, but "the key is to show no bias,"

and for that he has earned the respect of clients, and court recognition as an expert on constitutional matters relating to First Nations treaties in western Canada.

Matthew became president of the company and retired in 2014 after 28 years in aboriginal rights research. With complex court actions dragging on for years, he is still occasionally required as a witness regarding historical reports he wrote up to a decade ago. But he is very happy to be free of the administrative work involved managing a private sector company and thoroughly enjoys working on one or two historical research projects annually as a consultant for his former company.

Discovering the Arboretum

Matthew's family has roots in Quebec back to 1640. Born in Montreal, he moved to Ottawa with his parents as a teenager and enjoyed coming to the Farm to hang out with friends, visit the Agriculture Museum, and "get out of my parents' hair." He is an avid bicyclist and part of his commute by bike during his working years was through the Arboretum, which he came to love. "It's a beautiful place," he says, "and so relaxing to ride through after work."

When he retired in 2014, he wanted to explore the Arboretum more and learn about the trees, so he attended a volunteer orientation session and signed up with the Friends' Arboretum team, led by Eric Jones. "I've actually learned very little about trees," he says ruefully, "since we have our heads down most of the time attacking dog-strangling vine and other weeds."

Matthew also serves on the Friends' Board of Directors. He sits on the finance committee and, among other projects, leads a review of the Friends' investment policy. Thanks to generous donors, who share a concern about the Farm's future, a fund has been established to help the Friends of the Farm meet its goals, and Matthew has been instrumental in establishing guidelines for the use of that fund.

Matthew and Helen have done a lot of travelling, including a seven-month



backpacking trip around Asia, and have plans for more. Matthew thrives on absorbing the history and culture of the countries they visit. But he would also like to finish that graduate degree in history he started many years ago.



Gatineau' Siberian iris, introduced by Isabella Preston in 1928, painted by Arthur Kellett, a CEF botanical artist featured in *Blooms: An Illustrated History of the Ornamental Gardens at Ottawa's Central Experimental Farm.*

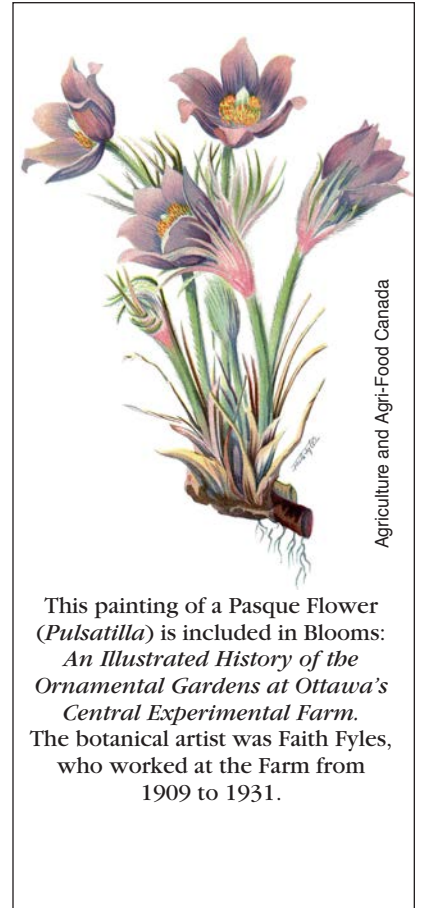


Courtesy of Jean-Pascal Gratton

Le jardin ornamentale,
by Claudette Gratton.

For her painting, this artist made use of a photo taken from a boom truck by her son J-P Gratton, supervisor of the Arboretum and Ornamental Gardens at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

J-P now uses a drone to photograph the Farm.



Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

This painting of a Pasque Flower (*Pulsatilla*) is included in *Blooms: An Illustrated History of the Ornamental Gardens at Ottawa's Central Experimental Farm*. The botanical artist was Faith Fyles, who worked at the Farm from 1909 to 1931.



deborah hignon-leblond

Sandra Moir and her father Chris Wilson at the Macoun Memorial Garden, June 24. Sandra's grandmother and great grandfather are in the photo on page 9.

Artists at the Ornamental Gardens

During the morning of *June Blooms* on June 24, several artists from the Ottawa Society of Botanical Artists (OSBA) were busy at the Ornamental Gardens. The goal of OSBA is “to portray botanical subjects with accuracy and artistry within the fine arts of drawing, painting and printmaking.” At the Gardens, artists were sketching, answering questions from the public and sharing their love of the plant world. They were also promoting Ottawa’s two current botanical art exhibitions—Canada Agriculture and Food Museum’s *Plant Portraits: Native Plants of Canada* and Canadian Museum of Nature’s *Art of the Plant* (see page 8).

Each artist planned to circulate through the garden “to find that special plant, blossom or leaf arrangement that speaks to us and captures our imagination,” wrote Kristin Rothschild, Program Co-ordinator, Art of the Plant, in an e-mail before the event. “We’ll be immersing ourselves in our choice of plant, with the aim of trying to capture its unique line, form and colour *en plein air* in graphite, watercolour or coloured pencil.

“At this spectacular time of the year, we’re looking forward to exploring the Garden’s amazing collection of peonies and Preston lilacs in bloom, as well as seeking out native Canadian plants in the Rock Garden and perennial and annual beds, to find that



OSBA members (left to right) Patricia van der Linde, Carla Burns and Kristin Rothschild, during *June Blooms*.

special plant subject to study and draw.”

The artists will be at the Gardens again on August 1. They will also be at the Civic Gardens, Lansdowne Park, on July 15 and

September 23.

For more information about the OSBA, visit www.ottawabotanicalart.blogspot.com.

R. Hinchcliff

Learning to Sketch at the Arboretum

By Maria Buehl and Rachelle Lapensee

NatureSketch - Ottawa's Junior Club held its first day of a six-week program at the Dominion Arboretum on May 5th, 2018.

The participants learned about Urban Parks and the various trees in the area. Along the trails, the children got to view various species of flora and fauna and learned how to identify various types of nests and dens. A wonderful time was had at the pond, where they spotted mallard ducks and a kingfisher.

During their first art lessons, the children were introduced to some of the basic building blocks of drawing. The class discussed using their five senses to identify with nature and participated in a fun game to engage them to think and see nature through the eyes of an artist and naturalist. The participants were encouraged to look for patterns and textures in the trees around them, and learned to draw them in their sketchbooks.

NatureSketch is a Robert Bateman Foundation initiative that aims to inspire appreciation of the natural world using a pencil and sketchbook. The program is led by an artist and a naturalist, and involves up to 15 participants who are led into various environments and ecosystems.

The Spring program is engaging children ages 5-12 with the goal of teaching them to familiarize themselves with various natural landscapes within and around their cities. The *NatureSketch* team in Ottawa hopes to inspire local participants (children, teens and adults) to get out in nature, while developing sketch art techniques.

If you love nature and art, and would like to participate in this unique adventure with *NatureSketch*, you can register and find out more information about the Ottawa team at www.naturesketch.org.

Maria Buehl is the lead artist for the NatureSketch Ottawa class. Rachelle Lapensee is an Ottawa naturalist.



Maria Buehl and children in the Arboretum in May

Rachelle Lapensee

Art of the Plant

A Global Renaissance of Botanical Art

By Patti Robson

The beauty and intricate details of Canada's native plants are featured in a new national exhibition of botanical art at the Canadian Museum of Nature. *Art of the Plant* includes 48 drawings and paintings by Canadian contemporary botanical artists, and was developed as part of an international collaboration with the American Society of Botanical Artists.

The *Art of the Plant*, which runs for five months until October 14, 2018, complements botanical art shows which opened in May in 24 countries worldwide. To coincide with the national exhibit, botanical art societies across Canada are presenting exhibitions of native plants. An exhibition by the Ottawa society is at the Canada Agriculture and Food Museum (see below).

Botanical art portrays plants with both scientific accuracy and artistic expression, integrating the history of art and the sciences of botany, horticulture, medicine and agriculture. Artwork is frequently in colour on a plain background and may depict the plant growing in its natural habitat.

The art is created by hand, using time-honoured, traditional techniques of drawing, painting and printmaking. The plants represented include trees, shrubs, lichens, mushrooms and wildflowers, as well as several species at risk in Canada such as the Cucumber Tree and southern Ontario's Prickly Pear Cactus. A geographical range map, and the common and scientific names are displayed with each artwork.

"The exhibition is a defining moment for botanical art in Canada. Collaborating

with the other 24 countries involved in this global event is breaking new ground for us all," says Kerri Weller, Exhibition Chair for *Art of the Plant*, and a noted teacher of botanical art in Ottawa.

"Through this project, we hope to bring attention to the importance of native plant biodiversity and conservation, as well as today's renaissance in botanical art."

A jury selected 26 of the pieces on display. A botanist on the jury ensured that the artwork was botanically accurate. The remaining 22 were invited from Canadian artists who have been recognized by the renowned Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

During the remaining run of the exhibition, the *Art of the Plant* team will present monthly guided tours for the public on Wednesdays (July 11, Aug. 8 and Sept. 12), as well as talks and tours for seniors (Aug. 22, Sept. 19 and Oct 4), and drawing workshops for seniors (July 25, Aug. 29, Sept. 26). There will also be a public talk about botanical art on October 4.

Artists from the Ottawa Society of Botanical Artists, who will be sketching at



Art of the Plant committee chair, Kerri Weller, talking with a member of the media at the exhibition opening. Kerri is a well-known local botanical artist and teacher.

Patti Robson

the Farm's Ornamental Gardens on August 1 (see page 7), will be happy to meet visitors and talk about the exhibition.

More information may be found at www.artoftheplant.com or at the Canadian Museum of Nature's website, www.nature.ca.

Patti Robson is a recently retired communications consultant who stays engaged working on and learning about new subject areas. After working with the wonderful volunteer team of Art of the Plant, she has a new appreciation of botanical art and will never look at a flower the same way again.

Plant Portraits: Native Plants of Canada

By Patti Robson

Presented by the Canada Agriculture and Food Museum in partnership with the Ottawa Society of Botanical Artists (OSBA), *Plant Portraits: Native Plants of Canada* is an impressive exhibition of modern botanical art, which runs until October 31 at the museum's Learning Centre.

Through more than 30 original artworks—in watercolour, graphite, and mixed media—the exhibition examines our native plants as seen through the eyes of local artists. Plant subjects are from the Ottawa region, including the Fletcher Wildlife Garden, and as far away as British Columbia.

The exhibition complements the national exhibition at the Canadian Museum of Nature entitled *Art of the Plant* (see above).

To coincide with the exhibition, the OSBA is providing, in partnership with the Canada Agriculture and Food Museum, monthly Tea and Tours on July 23, August 20, and September 17 from 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm, and drawing workshops in September. Information on the exhibition and these events is at www.ingeniumcanada.org/exhibitions/plant-portraits.

Artists from the Ottawa Society of Botanical Artists, who will be sketching at the Farm's Ornamental Gardens on August 1 (see page 7), will be happy to meet visitors and talk about both of these exhibitions.



Exhibition of botanical art at the Canada Museum of Agriculture and Food

Patti Robson

An Art Collection

By Richard Hinchcliff

Norah Wilson, née Macoun, grew up and got married at the Farm. The wedding was held at the Macoun residence, which stood where the Macoun Memorial Garden is now located at the Gardens. Norah's father, William T. Macoun worked at the Farm for 45 years and served as Dominion Horticulturist for the last 23.

Norah inherited her father's passion for horticulture, recalls her son Chris Wilson, and built beautiful gardens wherever the family lived. But she also had a passion for the paintings of local artists and began a collection that Chris has since expanded.

One of the artists represented in the collection is Graham Noble Norwell, who was active in Ottawa from 1921 to 1926. According to Norah, Chris says, Norwell used to come to the Ornamental Gardens to paint. Often short of cash, he would let passers-by chose a subject and paint it



Courtesy of Chris Wilson

W. T. Macoun and daughter Norah at her wedding in 1928.

This is a still from a movie of the wedding at the Macoun residence.

on the spot for them. Best known for his winter scenes in the Laurentians, Norwell has work in the National Gallery in Ottawa. He was prolific, says Chris, and it's a shame that none of his paintings of the Ornamental Gardens seem to have survived.

Another landscape artist with paintings in the National Gallery, and who is in Norah and Chris's collection was Henri Masson, who lived in Ottawa from 1921 and began exhibiting nationally in 1938 and internationally in 1946. Chris remembers going to Masson's studio on Preston Street, but does not know if he ever painted at the Farm.

Faith Fyles, the first botanical artist in the horticulture division of the Department of Agriculture, was a favourite painter (and friend) of Norah's. Fyles gave her a watercolour painting of trilliums as a wedding present (see this page). Another Fyles painting in the collection is of the perennial border that was formerly on the main lawn of the Farm (see page 1). Patricia Macoun, Norah's youngest sister, used to slip into the office of Faith Fyles at the Farm to watch her work. Pat remained a keen painter and some of her works are also in the collection.

As an aside, Chris remembers as a cheeky child annoying the adults by



Courtesy of Chris Wilson

Trilliums, a watercolour by Faith Fyles, a wedding present from her to Norah Wilson, daughter of W. T. Macoun

saying "Macoon" rather than the correct pronunciation of Macoun to rhyme with "town."

Chris does not know if his grandfather, William Macoun, was interested in the visual arts, apart from garden creation of course. He did love poetry though, and each of the three daughters — Norah, Maureen and Patricia — as well as their older brother John, were given a poem to learn, and recite when requested at social gatherings. Chris remembers his Aunt Maureen was able to recite her poem, Lewis Carroll's 'Jabberwocky', throughout the rest of her life.



The Friends of the Central Experimental Farm is a volunteer organization committed to the maintenance and protection of the Ornamental Gardens and the Arboretum of the Central Experimental Farm in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Membership for the Friends of the Farm costs \$30 per year for an individual, \$50 per year for a family, \$25 for seniors/students. Payment by PayPal available on website. Membership fees support the many projects of the Friends of the Farm.

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Hands in History*

(Ornamental Gardens, CEF)

1. W. T. Macoun Memorial Garden

By Blaine Marchand

Stepping back through ninety years,
down into this footprint of his former home,
sandstone walls precise along its perimeter,
a hint of foundation that conjures
children's playful patter overhead,
a screen door swinging
open and closed, a long porch,
archways covered in ivy,
stir of leaves in canopy
outside the turret study
where William fussed over page proofs,
for his *Catalogue of the trees and shrubs*.

Or perhaps, one hazy summer Sunday,
after prayers at St. Andrews,
sated by the midday meal,
he sat daydreaming in the shade
of the gallery, the incantation of bees in his ears,
looked over the expansive fields
and envisioned possible gardens to come -
bounty of roses rambling over a pergola,
scented pendants along lilac walkways,
a plenitude of cupped peonies,
swords of iris and trumpets of lilies
in long precincts of perennials.

Maybe, late one cold night,
the sky a blank canvas,
he paused over his jottings
to chuckle at his cursive line of verse -
"And see the lovely blooming plants,
for 'bloomers' are the craze",
and saw in its metaphor
his desire so strong -
the triumph from his labours,
a yield of fruits and ornamentals
able to conquer even this nation
given to long, merciless winter.

** This series celebrates each of the Ornamental Gardens and the Arboretum at the Central Experimental Farm in Ottawa.*

Consider joining the Friends of the Farm!

Find our membership form on the website: www.friendsofthefarm.ca/become-a-member-2/ and pay by PayPal, or send in a cheque.

Benefits include discounts on Master Gardener lectures, one adult member of a family free admission to the Canada Agriculture and Food Museum, quarterly printed newsletters by post, and monthly Farm Notes e-newsletter.

We also accept donations to support our activities and events, which also support the garden teams that maintain the cherished Ornamental Gardens. A variety of donations can be made through our webpage: www.friendsofthefarm.ca/donations/.



Friends of the Farm Annual General Meeting, 2018

Attendance was good at the Friends' Annual General Meeting in April. President Judy Dodds reported on a successful 2017 year for volunteers in the Gardens and Arboretum, for sales of the *Blooms* book, and for the Friends' fundraising events. She reported on new projects that are going ahead, such as the joint project with the Ottawa Horticulture Society, phase 2 of which will create heritage plant beds at the Macoun Memorial Garden, and the installation of information plaques at the Shelterbelt. She also outlined proposed projects that were under consideration.

The Friends' finances are healthy. This was indicated in Treasurer Randy Taylor's review of 2017 financial statements, during which he highlighted changes from the previous year; for example, those related to donations for and sales of the *Blooms* book. Using pie charts, he summarized the source and distribution of funds.

Randy also explained that as the Friends have received more than \$10,000 in donations in recent years, it is now considered a 'Soliciting Non-Profit Corporation' and therefore an audit will be conducted for the 2018 year.

Members at the AGM approved revisions to the Friends' by-laws, regarding the terms of office of directors. President Judy described the suggested revisions in her message in the Spring 2018 newsletter (see www.friendsofthefarm.ca/newsletters).

Long service recognition

Director of volunteers Donna Pape recognized and thanked the following volunteers for their years of service:

5 Years: Pam Cooper, Jean Durjan, Rose Marie Farley, Millie Harrington, Lise Anne James, Brendon Roy;

10 Years: Beverley Brookes, Fiona Cowell, Judy Dodds, Gretal Harmston, Judy Hyland, Eric Jones, Stephen Joy, Judith McBride, Carolyn Oldham, Catherine Pink, Eileen Reardon, Josephine Stanic, Roger Taguchi, Bryan Wooltorton, Barbara Wysocka;

15 Years: Christine Banfill, Judy Benner, Richard Hinchcliff, Al Jedel, Kevin O'Connor, Deepak Shah, Anna Louise Stevens.

Board of Directors, 2018-19

The Board for the coming year is as follows:

Judy Dodds, president
Shirley Ewen, secretary
Randy Taylor, treasurer
Shari Haas
Kate Harrigan
Deborah Higdon-LeBlond
Richard Hinchcliff
Eric Jones
Matthew LaCompte
Jeannine Lewis
Blaine Marchand
Donna Pape.

It was noted that board members are elected by the Friends' membership at the AGM, and that board members elect board officials, such as president, treasurer and secretary.

A Message from Councillor Brockington

Riley Brockington, city councillor for River Ward, which he claims to be "the prettiest in the city," congratulated the Friends of the Farm for the work done on behalf of Ottawa's Farm. He spoke of the role of the City Council during the planning process for the new hospital at the northeast part of the Farm. He referred to what he hoped would be a "green necklace" around the south and west portions of the hospital land, which would not be built on and would serve as a buffer to the Farm.

Health benefits from the Farm

The Farm's green space affects our exposure to pollutants, and thus has positive health benefits. This was a message from a talk at the Annual General Meeting by guest speaker Dr. Paul Villeneuve, professor of health sciences at Carleton University.

Macoun Memorial Garden Plant List, June 2018

Notes:

- numbers in parentheses indicate number of plants;
- list does not include spring-blooming bulbs, which are to be planted in fall 2018;
- an asterisk (*) indicates varieties that were developed at the CEF.

Northwest garden:

Mock orange, *Philadelphus* x 'Buckley's Quill' (1) *
Weigela florida 'Tango' (1) *
Weigela florida 'Samba' (1) *
Weigela florida 'Minuet' (1) *
Hydrangea macrophylla 'Bailmer' (2)
Jack in the Pulpit, *Arisaema triphyllum* (5)
Trillium grandiflorum (6)
Trillium sessile var. *luteum* (4)

Northeast garden:

False lupine, *Thermopsis caroliniana* syn. *villosa* (2)
Balloon flower, *Platycodon* sp. (3)
Daylily, *Hemerocallis* 'Flava' (2)
Baby's breath, *Gypsophila paniculata* 'Perfecta' (1)
Purple coneflower, *Echinacea purpurea* 'Magnus' (5)
Sneezeweed, *Helentium autumnale* (1)
Pblox paniculata 'Delilah' (1)

Lupine, *Lupinus* 'Gallery Blue' (2)
Lupine, *Lupinus* x Russell (2)
Pblox paniculata 'David' (1)
Strawberry foxglove, *Digitalis* x *mertonensis* (5)
Peach leaved bellflower, *Campanula persicifolia* 'Grandiflora' (3)
Peony, *Paeonia lactiflora* 'Nippon Beauty' (1)
Peony, *Paeonia lactiflora* 'Sarah Bernhardt' (1)
Peony, *Paeonia lactiflora* 'Krinkled White' (1)
Shasta daisy, *Leucanthemum* x *superbum* 'Becky' (5)
Blazing star, *Liatris spicata* (3)
Rose campion, *Lychnis coronaria* (5)
Lance-leaved coreopsis, *Coreopsis lanceolata* (4)
Coral bells, *Heuchera sanguinea* 'Ruby Bells' (6)
Carpathian bellflower, *Campanula carpatica* 'Blue Clips' (2)
Michaelmas Daisy, *Aster novae-angliae* 'Alma Potschke' (1)
Blanket flower, *Gaillardia* 'Goblin' (2)
Pinks, *Dianthus deltoides* 'Brilliant' (6)
Rock cress, *Arabis* sp. (1)
Candy tuft, *Iberis sempervirens* 'Purity' (2)
Rudbeckia fulgida 'Goldsturm' (6)
Mock orange, *Philadelphus* x 'Snowbelle' (1) *

Still to be planted:

Siberian iris, *Iris sibirica* 'River' series (3)*

A Natural Backdrop

By Blaine Marchand

Photos by Elisabeth Levesque-Mumford



Jasmine Chan and Phillippe Meunier



The young man's voice was as demanding as the red blinking light of the phone, telling me there was a message waiting to be heard. "When do the cherry blossoms bloom at the Experimental Farm?" his voice inquired all the way from Toronto. I explained that there were no cherry blossoms but suggested he was thinking of the Rosybloom crabapples that are a confection along Prince of Wales in May. He went on to explain that he planned to surprise his girlfriend with a visit to Ottawa and a proposal under the flowering trees.

This led me to think about the couples I have observed having their photos taken in the Ornamental Gardens and Arboretum either when I am strolling through the area or while working in the gardens with the peony garden team. By chance, I happened to meet a young photographer, Elisabeth Levesque-Mumford, that very week at a social event. I asked her if she ever took photos at the Experimental Farm and her immediate response was an unequivocal yes.

Beautiful all year round

"Personally, I love taking photos of couples or families at the Farm," Elisabeth told me in a follow-up interview. "There is such a great variety of spots to photograph our clients in. You can get a more open feel at certain spots, colourful backgrounds in

the gardens, more intimate forest-like areas and even a great indoor location in the greenhouse all in one central area! Bonus: it's beautiful all year round!"

For Elisabeth an added advantage of the Farm is its central location so that people from all over the region have easy access to it. And, it provides a "natural" backdrop for photographs that celebrate important occasions in people's lives.

"It's been pretty 50/50 when it comes to who suggests taking the photos at the Arboretum. We've had some couples suggest it themselves and some where we suggest it. It all depends on what type of feel the couple are going for or the proximity, such as if their wedding venue is close to the Farm, etc."

A childhood wish

Jasmine Chan and Phil Meunier are a couple who had Elisabeth and her business partner, Mathieu Brunet, do their engagement photos. The couple had met at university through Jasmine's best friend. It was love at first sight for her. But Philippe thought Jasmine was completely out of his league and read every signal wrong.

"I waited patiently for a few months," Jasmine explained, "and then I decided to make the first move. We have been inseparable ever since. In fact, after

university when Phil moved to Toronto, I followed him there. I had grown up in Ottawa and passed by the Experimental Farm frequently. I always fantasized that I would have my wedding pictures taken there surrounded by the beautiful flowers and greenery. But when we moved to Toronto, I felt disappointed when I realized I wasn't going to fulfill that childhood dream."

When the couple became engaged, they approached Elisabeth and Mathieu to take engagement photos. As Jasmine wrote in an e-mail: "Incredibly Liz and Mat suggested that Phil and I take our photos at the Farm. Little did they know it had been my childhood wish and that Ottawa was where Phil and I fell in love. They captured all this in such beautiful pictures."

When I mentioned to Elisabeth about the urgent call I had received from Toronto she chuckled. She told me that she and Mathieu had taken maternity photos of a couple just a few days before. The woman had chosen the Farm as the location for her photos for the very same reason - her wish for a backdrop of those Rosybloom crabapples.

Examples of Elisabeth and Mathieu's work can be seen at www.emphotos.ca.